

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 00535 152112Z

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SUBJECT: CONFEDERATION, VENEZUELAN WORKERS (CTV) SCHEDULES
CONGRESS APRIL 25 - MAY 1, 1975

1. THE CTV HAS SCHEDULED ITS SEVENTH CONGRESS FROM APRIL 25 TO MAY 1, 1975. THESE TRIENNIAL CONGRESSES ARE THE SUPREME AUTHORITY OF VENEZUELA'S PRINCIPAL LABOR CENTRAL (1,600,000 MEMBERS, ABOUT 50 PERCENT OF THE WORK FORCE). THE SEVEN HUNDRED DELEGATES WILL ELECT A NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WHICH WILL SERVE FOR THREE YEARS. ACCION DEMOCRATICA (AD) EXPECTS TO HAVE 450-500 OF THE DELEGATES AND THUS THE INTERESTING POLITICAL BATTLE FOR CTV LEADERSHIP WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE AD CAUCUS PRIOR TO THE INAUGURATION OF THE CONGRKZJ

2. THE DEATH OF CTV PRESIDENT FRANCISCO OLIVO (CARACAS 12556) HAS DEALT A SERIOUS BLOW TO THE PROSPECTS OF SUCH YOUTHFUL LEADERS AS GRAPHIC ARTS WORKER CARLOS LUNA (AGE 37) AND HEALTH WORKER ISMARIO GONZALEZ (AGE 40). THE ESTABLISHED LEADERSHIP (ACTING CTV SECRETARY GENERAL AUGUSTO MALAVE (AGE 70) AND PETROLEUM WORKER MANUEL PENALVER (AGE 48) WILL SUPPORT CTV INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY JOSE VARGAS (AGE 51) FOR THE CTV PRESIDENCY. VARGAS SEEMS CONFIDENT OF VICTORY WHILE LUNA ADMITS HE FACES A DIFFICULT TASK IN TRYING TO DEPOSE MEN WHO HAVE ENJOYED THIRTY YEARS OF CTV LEADERSHIP. THE ATTITUDE OF PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ MAY PLAY THE DECISIVE ROLE IN THE PARTY CAUCUS.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 CARACA 00535 152112Z

3. THE NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE CTV WILL PROBABLY DIVIDE ITS FIFTEEN SECRETARIATS IN THE FOLLOWING FASHION: AD-EIGHT OR NINE; SOCIAL CHRISTIANS (COPEI) - TWO OR THREE; MOVIMENTO ELECTORAL DE PUEBLO (MEP) - TWO; UNION REPUBLICANA DEMOCRATICA (URD) - ONE; OTHER POLITICAL GROUPINGS - ONE OR TWO. THE PRESIDENCY WILL REMAIN IN THE HANDS OF AD WHILE COPEI WILL PROBABLY RETAIN THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT. SINCE ON IMPORTANT QUESTIONS PARTY DISCIPLINE APPLIES, AN EIGHT-MEMBER MAJORITY ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WOULD GIVE AD ABSOLUTE POWER ON CRITICAL ISSUES.

4. MANY FOREIGN DELEGATIONS WILL ATTEND THE VII CONGRESS. DELEGATES TO THE ORGANIZATION OF PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES (OPEC) WORKERS MEETING TO BE HELD FROM APRIL 21 - APRIL 24 (CARACAS 0082) ARE EXPECTED TO EXTEND THEIR STAYS. ALL FACTIONS OF THE CTV EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT THE AFL-CIO WILL SEND A LARGE AND HIGH-RANKING FRATERNAL DELEGATION TO THE CONGRESS.

5. COMMENT: VARGAS WILL PROBABLY WIN THE CTV PRESIDENCY BY CALLING IN THE POLITICAL DEBTS WHICH HE AND HIS GROUP HAVE BUILT UP OVER MANY YEARS, BUT THE NEW GENERATION OF CTV LEADERS WHO HAVE BECOME ACTIVE SINCE THE QOTI OVERTHROW OF THE PEREZ JIMENEZ DICTATORSHIP ARE SHOWING MUCH MORE AGGRESSIVENESS AND VIGOR THAN THEY HAVE IN THE PAST. THEIR DAY WILL NO DOUBT COME, EVEN IF IT IS NOT IN 1975. INTERVENTION BY PRESIDENT PEREZ, HOWEVER, COULD UPSET THIS PREDICTION. U.S. PARTICIPATION IN THE CTV CONGRESS WOULD BE A BRIGHT SPOT IN WHAT LOOKS TO BE A DIFFICULT YEAR FOR U.S.-VENEZUELAN RELATIONS. THE EMBASSY STRONGLY SECONDS THE SENTIMENTS OF THE CTV LEADERSHIP IN DESIRING A STRONG AFL-CIO DELEGATION.
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